

THE MORNING NEWS

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Unveiling of Anne Frank statue brings international and island dignitaries together



First Lady Doina Eman and students unveil the statue



Foundation President Diana Pieters and artist Joep Coppens

In a demonstration of the tolerance for all religions, colors and creeds for which the image of Anne Frank has be-

come a symbol over the decades since her death, the Aruban Foundation Respeta bida ... semper corda" (Re-

spect life ... always remember) welcomed an array of island and international dignitaries for the unveiling of their first project, a statue of the young girl who died in a Nazi concentration camp, in Wilhelmina Park in Oranjestad.

The statue by Dutch artists Joep Coppens was commissioned by the foundation which came into existence at the end of last year, at the urging of Aruba's Prime Minister Mike Eman, with First Lady Doina Eman as its patroness. She had the honor of joining with a group of students from Juliana School in performing the official unveiling ceremony, after a large gathering listened to the inspiring words of guest speakers and community leaders on the necessity of peace through tolerance of all beliefs.

Continue on pg 9

Continued from pg 1

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Rabbi of Temple Beth Israel Aruba, Dr. Mario Gurevich



Aruban Born ABC White House Correspondent Maureen Bunyan



Aruba First Lady Doina Eman and Rabbi Soetendorp

Foundation Chairperson, Diane Pieters-Gonzales led the parade of speakers, which included Prime Minister Eman, ABC news anchorwoman and U.S. White House Correspondent Maureen Bunyan, who was born

in Aruba, and the Rabbi of Aruba's Temple Beth Israel, Dr. Mario Gurevich. International speakers included Hans Westra, former Director of the Anne Frank Foundation in the Netherlands, Rabbi Awraham Soetendorp, President and founder of the Jacob Soetendorp Institute for Human Values, and Martin Luther King III, son of the martyred Civil Rights leader. Lisa de Lannoy acted as moderator for the sunset ceremony, which took place on Sunday, June 12, the anniversary of Anne Frank's birth.

The diverse array of speakers addressed the issue of tolerance not only for those of the Jewish faith, but all faiths, and all races. Martin Luther King III, whose father was killed when he was 10, whose uncle was killed 2 years later, and whose grandmother was shot to death while playing the organ in church 4 years after the death of his father, talked of the necessity of discerning a heinous act from a group of people, and learning to abhor the violence, but not allow oneself to be consumed by hate because of association.

Rabbi Dr. Gurevich recalled an incident from his medical career in Colombia, when a young boy fell into a well, and the entire country followed his rescue, then cried when he was brought out dead.

"Other children died in our hospital that day, but no one cried for them; this boy had a name and a face, and so we all shared the grief of losing him. Anne Frank has put a name and face to all those who had suffered during the Holocaust; we must not forget those six million who do not have a name and a face."



Martin Luther King III and wife, Shereen de Cuba foundation treasurer, Aruba's PM Mike Eman, and Martha Lichtenstein, foundation treasurer



Participating students of Juliana School and Martin Luther King III

One of the most stirring moments of this poignant event was when 18 year old Angelle Stamper came to the podium to read a remarkably mature and moving original poem she wrote for the occasion titled "Freedom Within." It express how words of Anne Frank's diary, written under such dire circumstance over 70 years ago, still speaks to and inspires a new generation; she received a standing ovation from the audience.

Prime Minister Mike

Eman, who planted the seed for this project, ruminated on the necessity of tolerance on such a small island as Aruba for its society to not only progress, but survive as a community; he was extremely gratified by the support for this project, and the turnout for the unveiling.

Artist Coppens' bronze statue depicts Anne Frank with her hands bound, but looking towards the sky in hope of a better world; it stands on a pedestal with four

sides, which contains a quote from her diary "How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world." Each side is written in one of the languages commonly spoken on Aruba: Papiamentu, English, Dutch and Spanish, symbolic of the many groups that peacefully co-exist on the island, and a reminder for them to continue to do so.

By: Rosalie Klein